



## Two more to immortality

AGENCIES, Rio de Janeiro

Everything stood still. Even the lottery draw in Jamaica was delayed, but Usain Bolt hit the jackpot last night, continuing his dominance in the sprints.

He entered the Olympic Stadium track to Earth-moving screams and with arms spread wide, quite like the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue that overlooks the city. He left it in very much the same way that he arrived: on top.

Usain Bolt is the first man to win three Olympic 100m gold medals and now takes his tally to seven, with Jamaica improving to two gold and a bronze after three days of track-and-field action at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

"I came here to show the world again that I am the best, and this is a good start," said Bolt, arguably the greatest sporting icon in the world after boxing legend Muhammad Ali.

Justin Gatlin had to settle for the silver medal. If he keeps collecting silver at this

rate, his only rival will be Judas Iscariot himself. Young Canadian Andre de Grasse took the bronze with 9.91 seconds.

Bolt, in golden spikes as bright as his legend, was left with all the work to do at the halfway stage. Gatlin was gone. Like a bat out of hell, he left the blocks in quite a rush, pushing the Jamaican to chase him down, with Bolt even having time to look across at his nemesis before crossing the line.

The 29-year-old Bolt galloped away in celebration, basking in the adulation of the stadium and even taking selfies with fans during his lap of honour.

The victory left Bolt standing alone in the 120-year history of sprinting in the modern Olympic games.

It also leaves Bolt on track to complete an incredible "triple-triple" of clinching 100m, 200m and 4x100m relay titles for a third consecutive Olympics.

"Somebody said I can become immortal. Two more medals to go and I can sign off. Immortal," Bolt added.

But for his dope-tainted American rival Gatlin it was again a job that left him with two things to do, get booed and lose. He accomplished both. Gatlin, who had been booed by the Rio crowd as he was introduced, however put up a brave face after his defeat--the eighth out of nine meetings with Bolt.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Usain Bolt completed the first part of his bid for a 'triple-triple' after he aced the 100m event on Sunday night, following a customary slow start, and lived up to his billing as the star man of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

## Raju in Dhaka for spin camp

SPORTS REPORTER

Former Indian Test spinner Venkatapathy Raju will conduct a six-day spin bowling camp for members of the Bangladesh Cricket Board's High Performance Programme and the national team at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur from today.

Eight spinners from the national team and 17 from the HP unit have been called up to the camp. The national spinners include Tajjilul Islam, Jubair Hossain, Sohrawadi Shuvo, Shuvagata Hom, Nasir Hossain, Sabbir Rahman, Mosaddek Hossain and Mahmudullah Riyad.

Some of the spinners from the HP unit include Saqlain Sajib, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Sanjamul Islam, Al-Amin, Mosharraf Hossain Rubel and Shohag Gazi.

47-year-old Raju has played 28 Tests and 53 ODIs for India. He was a slow left-arm bowler and had scalped 93 Test wickets and 63 ODI wickets in the 1990s. Best known for his tenacity in pegging away at the batsmen, he last represented India in 2001 during the Test series against Australia.

## It's Bolt time

AGENCIES, Jamaica

Traffic came to a standstill and thousands stood in muddy puddles after a heavy storm, but Usain Bolt had won so it was time to party in Jamaica. It was not confirmed from where Chris Gayle, the cricket superstar of Jamaica, had watched his fellow countryman running in Rio, his Instagram post with a video from his cell phone however revealed how excited he was.

"Champion, champion, Usain Bolt champion," he chanted loudly, as a reference to a popular song during West Indies' T20 World Cup triumph in India earlier this year, immediately after Bolt had won the blue ribbon event.

The national green and yellow colours dominated streets as people poured out to watch the Rio Olympics 100m on giant screens.

It was cool and there was a slight drizzle, but nothing could put a damper on the island's festivities.

As Bolt struck his familiar lightning pose, Jamaicans blew whistles and horns and banged metal pot covers.

They gathered in towns centres like Half Way Tree in Kingston, Sam Sharpe Square in Montego Bay and Falmouth, near where Bolt was born and developed as a runner into the global star.

Traffic halted in Sam Sharpe Square with spectators standing in puddles of water left from a heavy afternoon shower -- without even seeming to notice -- as they stretched to see a giant screen on the side of a building.

"The greatest ever," said one man, who gave his name as Charlie. "He is the best. He can't stop running now, he must go on."

With tears running down her face Sonia Brown, a hotel worker from neighbouring Hanover parish, was still dressed

in her uniform. She chanted "Usain, Usain, Usain" while intermittently blowing on a long red plastic Vuvuzela horn. Strangers hugged and celebrated and not a single person admitted they had any doubts he would win.

But there was a collective gasp as he came out of the blocks behind American rival Justin Gatlin. By the time Bolt had caught the field at the midpoint, the cheering had started and by the time he crossed the line, the party was in full swing.

"Jamaica is the land of speed, we have the fastest man and woman in the world," Shiela Paul said. "We are going to win the two 200m and the two relays as well."

Some Jamaicans though are hard to please. Joel Clarke, who said he raced against Bolt in high school, said his only disappointment was that Bolt did not go lower.

"I think he could have run faster, his start was poor and he slowed down at the end, but a gold is a gold, I am good with that."

Clarke thinks the 200m will be easier for Bolt. "That's his race, he will go hard there, it won't be close."

Eric Jones who is from Trelawny, Bolt's hometown, said: "I felt like I was there, in Brazil. I did not want to take a taxi home and miss the race and I am glad I came here tonight to see history."

While there were commiserations for Yohan Blake, who finished fourth and just missed a medal, there were no sympathies for American Justin Gatlin who has served two doping bans.

"Gatlin should retire now, he can't beat Bolt, he only talks," said Sydney Clarke, as he celebrated with a woman friend.

"Gatlin can't back up his chat. Bolt will beat him every time no matter where they put the race."



## Misbah bats for Bangladesh

STAR SPORTS DESK



Pakistan skipper Misbahul Haq is the latest voice to speak out in support of England touring Bangladesh, warning of the damage that the country may suffer if England call of their upcoming tour in October due to security fears.

The July 1 terrorist attack on the Holy Artisan Bakery in Gulshan was followed by England ODI skipper Eoin Morgan expressing doubt about their upcoming tour. They now await an assessment from an England team security advisor to make a final decision on the tour.

"It's their (England's) decision but if a team is not playing at home, it's really not good for cricket," Misbah told AFP after leading Pakistan to a 10-wicket win in the fourth Test against England on Sunday.

"People in Bangladesh love cricket. They have a craziness for it.

"If they are deprived of hosting cricket, it could be a big loss for them," he added.

Pakistan have not played at home since the 2009 attack in Lahore on the Sri Lankan team bus which saw six players injured, as well as the deaths of six policemen and two civilians.

They have since been playing their home matches in the UAE. Although the situation in Pakistan since the turn of the century has been much direr than in Bangladesh -- where multination tournaments like the Under-19 World Cup, the Asia Cup and the World Twenty20 have been held -- they do serve as a cautionary tale of what can happen to a team in exile.

"Sometimes people think it's really easy for us playing in the UAE. But just living every day away from your country, without your family and friends, and playing every game away from Pakistan, is really difficult. I can only see my mother once a year."

Recently, Bangladesh's British fielding coach Richard Halsall -- currently in Bangladesh -- spoke out in favour of the tour happening, saying that 'it is safe to here'.

### MEDALS TALLY

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
United States	26	21	23
Great Britain	15	16	8
China	15	14	17
Russian Federation	9	11	10
Germany	8	5	4
Italy	7	9	6
France	7	8	7
Japan	7	4	15
Australia	6	7	9
Republic of Korea	6	3	5
Hungary	5	3	4
Netherlands	5	2	3
Spain	3	0	2
New Zealand	2	6	0
Canada	2	2	9
Kazakhstan	2	2	4
Colombia	2	2	0
Poland	2	1	2
Switzerland	2	1	2
Belgium	2	1	1
Thailand	2	1	1

(The medals tally was updated at 10:00pm Bangladesh time)

## The pride of Mymensingh

ANISUR RAHMAN from Mymensingh

Mymensingh's rich sporting culture is evident in its history. It boasts the first football club of the country and also the first football tournament. But no appreciation of the region's contribution to Bangladesh's sporting tapestry can be complete without the name of cricketer Ram Chand Gowala.

During the 1970s, the left-arm spinner who got his start at the Panditpara Athletic Club created havoc for opposition batsmen by catching them in his expertly spun web, but he is now hostage to decrepitude and various diseases. The lifetime bachelor now spends most of his time with grandson Akash Gosh and granddaughter Othoi Gosh -- children of his niece -- at the tin-shed building at Brahmanpalli. For recreation he watches cricket matches on TV and indulges in chitchat with childhood friends at a tea stall in front of his house counts as recreation.

When this reporter visited his house yesterday, Gowala reminisced on his playing career and his memories of his beloved club -- Abahani. But his move to the club was affected by the darkest event in Bangladesh's history -- the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members; particularly his son Sheikh Kamal, who founded Abahani.

"I still carry the grief that Sheikh Kamal did not have the opportunity to see me join Abahani," said a teary-eyed Gowala.

"The formidable Dhaka University cricket team came to play the regional final against Mymensingh and I took six wickets to beat them. I was introduced to University captain Sheikh Kamal. I can't recall the year but it might be the year before Kamal's marriage [1974]," Gowala recalled.

"Later Sheikh Kamal came to our Panditpara AC and offered me a chance to play for Abahani. But the killing of the Bangabandhu family on August 15 meant the move became



RAM CHAND GOWALA

difficult, and I felt very sad knowing that Kamal would not get a chance to see me playing for Abahani. Later, I communicated with Harunur Rashid Bhui to let him know about my promise to Sheikh Kamal. And since then I am an Abahani boy," concluded a tearful Gowala yesterday.

Gowala joined Abahani in 1978 and played through to the next year before coming back to Mymensingh. He later rejoined Abahani in 1981 and

ended his career at the Dhanmondi-based outfit. He also played for archrivals Mohammedan SC before joining Abahani.

The match between Abahani and Mohammedan in 1996 was the best moment in his playing career as he claimed the two important scalps of Sri Lanka's World Cup-winning duo of Arjuna Ranatunga and De Silva to beat Mohammedan.

Ram Chand Gowala was initially a left-arm pace bowler but he later turned into a left-arm spinner on the advice of Mymensingh's notable cricketer-turned-coach Fakharuddin.

"Once I used to play in the circuit house ground and took wickets regularly. The ball swung automatically but I didn't have any knowledge of how to grip the ball. One day, an official of Panditpara AC asked me to come to the club and handed me over to coach Fakharuddin, who advised me to become a spin bowler. I learnt a lot from wizard Fakharuddin," said Gowala.

"If I was 35 years younger, I am sure I could have secured a place in the national team and earned a lot of money," said Gowala, who struggles financially to buy his daily medicine.

"Except a few officials and former players of Abahani, no one asks after me. However, journalists always ask. I am now meeting my expenditure from an amount the Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association provided me two years back," said Gowala.

## Murray makes history

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Rio de Janeiro

Andy Murray doesn't have the flamboyance of Rafael Nadal. He doesn't have the finesse of Roger Federer either. And he even doesn't have the nerve of Novak Djokovic. Yet what he has -- an unyielding attitude under real pressure and a resilience which often plays on the nerves of his opponents -- has been good enough for him over the years. It has been good enough to earn him three Grand Slam titles, and now it has proved to be good enough to win him two Olympic singles titles, something which eluded not only the 'Big Three' but also the whole legion of tennis players down the years.

On Sunday at the centre court of Rio de Janeiro's Olympic Tennis Centre, the 29-year-old Scot brought out the best of those qualities to deny a surging Juan Martin del Potro from taking the title. The three-time Grand Slam winner was engaged in a battle of attrition for four hours before getting the better of the Argentine in four sets (7-5, 4-6, 6-2, 7-5).

"To finish it with a match like that, it was obviously very emotional," a visibly exhausted Murray told reporters. "The fact it hasn't been done before is, it's a very difficult thing to do. I wasn't thinking about that when I was playing. It hasn't been done before shows it's very hard, so I'm very proud to have done that."

The defending champion had been flirting with danger all through this tournament. During a stretch of six



Andy Murray celebrates his victory against Juan Martin del Potro on Sunday. He became the first tennis player in Olympic history to win back-to-back individual gold medals.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

matches in eight days, Murray was pushed to the brink by Italy's Fabio Fognini in the third round. Then he survived a major scare against Steven Johnson of South Africa in the quarterfinal. His service was poor, Murray admitted. He also had trouble dealing with the wind, he had said after the quarterfinal.

"This had been much harder than it was in London [2012 Games]. The match in the final there was fairly straightforward. Whereas tonight, anything could have happened," Murray confessed. "I was tired. We played four hours, especially on this surface on a

very humid night. There was a lot of running. It was physically hard, and I served badly tonight. I didn't serve well and that made the match even tougher than it was already."

But Murray is not the defending champion for nothing. While his all-round game was not at its best, he used the opposition's weaknesses to good advantage and those points proved crucial in deciding the outcome. "I just had to find a way even though I wasn't serving well, and I managed to get enough breaks of serve. I came up with some good serves at the right moment," Murray explained.